

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A process for supplying bubbles to a filtering membrane and cleaning an aerator producing the bubbles, the filtering membrane being immersed in a tank containing water, the process comprising the steps of:

- a) flowing a gas to an aerator to produce a pressure in the aerator sufficient to produce bubbles from the aerator which contact the filtering membrane;
- b) ~~after step a),~~ reducing the pressure in the aerator by venting the aerator to atmosphere, such that water in the tank enters the aerator and wets solids accumulated in the aerator,

wherein steps a) and b) are performed in a repeated cycle; and,

- ~~c) after step b), returning to step a).~~

2. (Original) The process of claim 1 wherein step b) comprises reducing the rate of flow of gas to the aerator by at least half.

3. (Original) The process of claim 1 wherein step b) comprises stopping the flow of gas to the aerator.

4. (Canceled)

5. (Original) The process of claim 1 wherein the aerator is vented to atmosphere by opening a valve in a pipe in communication with the aerator.

6. (Original) The process of claim 1 wherein step b) is performed periodically, successive performances of step b) being separated by a pre-determined time interval.

7. (Original) The process of claim 1 wherein the aerator has holes in its bottom surface.

8. (Withdrawn) An apparatus for aerating a membrane immersed in a tank containing water, comprising:

- a) an aerator located to provide bubbles which contact the membrane;
- b) a pipe connecting the aerator to an air supply source; and,
- c) a pipe connecting the aerator to atmosphere through a valve.

9. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of claim 8 wherein the aerator has a series of holes at the bottom of the aerator.